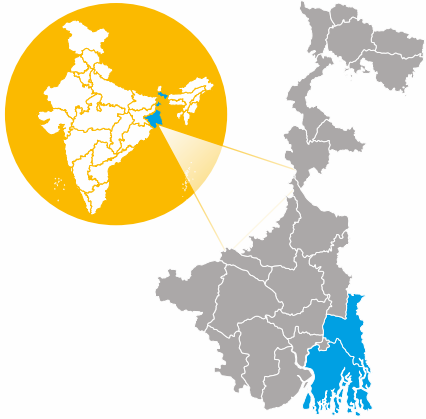


Cyclone and a Pandemic— Providing Health Services in the face of a Dual Disaster

WEST BENGAL

unicef  for every child



Cyclone Amphan, which hit West Bengal on 20 May 2020, affected more than 10 million and killed 86 people.

The Sunderbans delta of South 24 Parganas District, a hard to reach area, was one of the worst affected.

While COVID-19 pandemic had already disrupted the health services across the state, Cyclone Amphan added to this critical situation by damaging many of the health sub-centres.



UNICEF responded to the situation very quickly and the first response was the organisation of health camps with West Bengal Doctors Forum (WBDF), and Shramajibi Swasthya Udyog (SSU) NGO.

28 health camps have been organized by UNICEF, WBDF & SSU in 3 worst affected blocks- Gosaba, Patharpratima and Namkhana, where more than 1,500 patients were treated.

Valuable advice for prevention of diarrhoea, other communicable diseases and COVID-19 was also given in these camps.



7,907 Zinc tablets, 14,902 Halazone tablets, 5,117 1% bleaching solutions were distributed.



UNICEF, in collaboration with Inter Agency Groups, undertook another major initiative, of setting up of Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT) plus Corners in the worst affected areas of South 24 Parganas.



The ORT plus Corners demonstrated preparation of Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS), handwashing; disseminated messages for diarrhoea and COVID prevention and distributed ORS, Zinc, bleaching solution etc.

The initiative was also dovetailed with Intensified Diarrhoea Control Fortnight (IDCF) which is annually held in the month of June.



The 8 ORT Corners were visited by 12,324 people of whom 5,444 were male and 6,864 were female.



Handwashing was practiced at ORT corners established at different health centres.



7,305 water purification, 10,405 ORS preparation and 11,919 handwashing demonstrations were conducted.



As a part of the mass awareness drive, 11,778 preventive messages on diarrhoea and 11,715 risk communications on COVID-19 were disseminated to provide relief in the disaster struck region.

Post-Amphan, very few diarrhoea cases were reported from the affected areas, indicating success of overall preventive measures.